



LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 2025

5:30 P.M.

SPARKS LIBRARY 1125 12th Street, Sparks, NV 89431

Library Trustees:

Ann Silver, Chair

Tami Ruf, Vice Chair

Gianna Jacks, Trustee

Lea Moser, Trustee

Marie Rodriguez, Trustee

## Salute to the Flag - Led by Trustee Rodriguez

### 1. Roll Call [Non-Action Item]

- Present – Vice Chair Ruf, Trustee Rodriguez, Trustee Jacks, Trustee Moser
- Chair Ann Silver joined later at 6:10pm

### 2. Reports

#### a) Library Director Update by Jeff Scott [Non-Action Item]

- Director Scott highlighted the new Spring edition of the Library Explorer magazine. The Senior Center Library reopening after renovations has been pushed back to coincide with Older Americans Month in May. This renovation included the installation of new AV equipment that will enhance future board meetings at that location. Director Scott covered other library events and programs including youth events such as Nevada Reading Week. Director Scott mentioned a 2% increase in book check-outs, and a 3% increase in computer usage since last fiscal year. He noted that part of this was the 8% increase in use of Wi-Fi in library locations and suggested possible laptop checkout programs in the future. A graphic was displayed illustrating the check out trends from 7/1/24 to 3/1/25 by branch.
- Director Scott started to address the budget, mentioning that the library is mostly on target, but was stopped by VC Ruf who requested he continue onto the technology plan and come back to the budget when Chair Silver arrives.

#### b) Library Technology Plan [Non-Action Item]

- Director Scott spoke about components of the current plan and previously implemented technology that has helped the library streamline check in processes. Director Scott discussed possible future additions to library branches without automated book drops.
  - VC Ruff asked about the cost of maintenance on the automated machines. Director Scott explained that the automated book drops do not require much maintenance but that the security gates are expensive to maintain and the library is looking for alternatives. RFID has improved library security in regard to book collections and helps with inventory management.
  - VC Ruf asked how often inventory is done for the library. Director Scott responded that all books have RFID tags that allow them to be tracked and checked in/out of the system easily. He suggested that Collection Development Manager Debi Stears would be able to give more details about inventory.

- Director Scott continued to outline current library technology services including the Makerspace with 3D printers. All printing is monitored, and no harmful items (guns, knives) are allowed to be printed. He also mentioned that the Makerspace has taken a backseat in recent years due to its low level of need as reflected on the public survey. The equipment is maintained but use has seen a drop off post COVID.
  - VC Ruf asked how surveys are conducted. Director Scott replied that surveys are available on the Washoe County Library website and are distributed in print to all the branches and other community locations. The most recent survey was August 2021 in which he learned that transportation was an issue for rural patrons. The Book Mobile and kiosks in Sun Valley and Cold Springs, as well as increased weekend hours, were a direct result of that survey.
  - VC Ruf asked when the next survey will be sent out. Director Scott replied that he is waiting for the budget to be decided, but he hopes to introduce the idea in May.
  - Trustee Rodriguez asked if the RTC can help with transportation issues and if that information can be shared with patrons. Director Scott let the board know he has worked with the county and RTC. Trustee Moser also created a bus route map that is available at all library branches, along with RTC brochures. He clarified that many patrons knew about the service, they were just frustrated by the procedures involved and desired an easier solution. Director Scott also mentioned the possible future transportation enhancements for the North Valleys area.
- Director Scott mentioned the recent Executive Order regarding MILS and library funding. He is working with state librarian Mike Strong and Mark Amodei to better understand how this decision will impact the Washoe County library system. He stressed that most of this funding is used for rural library services which are a vital part of Nevada. Director Scott went on to outline other library services such as one-on-one help with a librarian, after hours meetings rooms, available library databases, and services such as Libby. He mentioned efforts to advertise Libby services on RTC buses and at the Reno-Tahoe Airport.
  - VC Ruf asked if advertising Libby at the RTC and airport incurred a charge. Director Scott said that the RTC post is a public information document and not an advertisement and therefore posted free of charge. He is working to secure advertising at a low to no cost for the library.

- Director Scott continued with technology updates including trainings for staff and patrons on AI, the cost of eBooks/audiobooks vs physical copies, and the decline in public access computer usage. He mentioned the upgrade to 1gb high speed internet last year, the increase in laptop usage, and the possibility of laptop checkouts in the future, keeping in mind barriers to use.
  - VC Ruf asked who the “we” is who decides the tech. Director Scott answered that it is the Reference Technology Training team led by Assistant Director Stacy McKenzie. Staff and patrons are consulted, and the needs of branches are discussed.
  - VC Ruf asked if this team meets monthly. Director Scott says they meet weekly to get ahead of potential issues.
- Director Scott mentioned that the new tech survey will go out at the end of the month for public feedback. It will be available on the webpage and in branches. This is following the same procedure as the senior tech survey in 2022. The survey results will be shared with the board. Patron desire for streaming services was discussed and the challenges involved, such as the high cost.
  - VC Ruf said that adding streaming service options would be costly. Director Scott agreed and mentioned services like Hoopla and Kanopy that often have fewer viewing options, restrictions on check out length, and AI content.
- VC Ruf announced Ann Silver’s arrival.
- Director Scott detailed trainings for staff around AI and Chat GPT, and future plans to share this information with patrons. High speed internet needs were discussed, and the need for older patrons to be educated on computer and technology use.
  - Chair Silver questioned if the library could be all things to all people. Director Scott stressed the importance of the library surveys for precisely this reason. Through surveys and forums the library can understand patron needs and then decide what can be done effectively and with the budget available.
  - Chair Silver stressed that the board should decide what services the library provides based on consistent vs special needs, and providing equitable services. Director Scott agreed.
  - Chair Silver asked if the board would have access to the library surveys. Director Scott affirmed that the board would have access and their feedback is desired.

- Trustee Moser asked about the functionality of the holds system. Director Scott explained how patrons are alerted when a book is available, and if an alert does not come through to please let library staff know.
- Trustee Moser asked how the surveys are built. Director Scott responded that the library team crafts the survey with questions aimed at patron needs.
- Director Scott mentioned the budget is on target with 35% of the year remaining. The only area of greater use are the line items related to book purchasing, which is always done ahead of the general curve.
  - Trustee Ruff asked if the budget runs January to December. Director Scott corrected that it runs per fiscal year, June to July. He then clarified budget questions such as the end of the expansion fund (June 3<sup>rd</sup>) and the balance of 4.4 million.
  - Chair Silver asked if there as been any communication from the country regarding the future budget. Director Scott answered that he is waiting for the meeting on April 8<sup>th</sup> at which point he will know how much money the library has been allocated and seek board input.
  - Chair Silver mentioned the threat of future layoffs and her concerns for staff. Director Scott mirrored her concerns. Chair Silver expressed the desire to add advance contingency plans for the next agenda. Director Scott clarified that the budget needs to be decided before any plans can be made. Branch managers have contingencies based on different events, worst to best. Due to the circumstances, there are no hard plans in place. Director Scott's contingency plan was essentially what he presented to the board in December 2024.
  - VC Ruff stated that 12.5 million funds can be counted on. She questioned if Director Scott believed any of this could be taken. As far as Director Scott understands it, that money is secure, however there could be changes in the budget cycle.
  - Trustee Jacks questioned who submits budget requests. Director Scott answered that he does and always asks for the full budget. He further clarified how budgets are decided.
  - Trustee Moser had a question about the Trustee stipend and when those would be given out. Director Scott said it should be automatic as it's a budget line item but he will check.

- Chair Silver asked if that money could be taken out of the budget. Director Scott said their stipend is mandated and cannot be taken out, however it can be donated or possibly returned to the county. Trustee Moser volunteered that she always donates hers back to the library.

c) Spanish Language Services Plan Update [Non-Action Item]

- Director Scott covered the Spanish language offerings at the library. More Spanish language materials are needed for the book mobile, particularly children's books. He emphasized the importance of the library's partnership with NNLC. A graphic was shown illustrating Spanish language check outs by branch.

d) Jail Library Services Update [Non-Action Item]

- Megan Conelly of Library Technical Services detailed the Library Jail services program.
- Trustee Moser thanked Megan Conelly for her presentation and asked about the funding source for the book budget. Conelly replied that it comes out of the library's regular book budget. Trustee Moser questioned the impact the potential budget cuts might have on this program. Conelly responded that it's hard to know until the budget is finalized.
- Trustee Rodriguez asked for clarification regarding funding for the Library Aide who is employed at the prison. Conelly clarified that the Aide is not part of the library budget and is provided by the sheriff's office.
- VC Ruff asked about jail library donations. Conelly said that donations can be made at any library and only paperbacks are accepted.
- Chair Silver asked for clarification about the donation process. Conelly clarified that donated items are reviewed for quality and chosen from the pool of donated books. Chair Silver asked for further clarification and Connelly detailed the donation process.

3. Public Comment – Two Minute Time Limit Per Person [Non-Action Item] No discussion or action by the Board may be taken upon any matter raised under this public comment section until the matter has been specifically included on an agenda.

- **Chair Silver read aloud the code of conduct.**
- Joni Hammond: Expressed concerns about perceived sexual content in children's literature. Addressed counter arguments.

- Krysta Flanagan: Expressed support for public libraries, detailing personal experience, and the support they give to lower income families and those who are unhoused. Thanked librarians.
- Tara de Queiroz: Requested board members complete available library trustee trainings and share status with community members.
- Candace Powell: Expressed support for librarians. Mentioned previous board meeting where a librarian was verbally harassed by community member. Thanked Chair Silver for reading the code of conduct aloud and urged members to act in the future.
- Laura Wade: Expressed support for libraries. Requested agenda item for next month to actively stop hate speech during public comment. Expressed concern as a queer community member.
- Noelle Patterson: Expressed support for libraries and the services they provide. Hopes the budget continues to support these efforts.
- Laura Wetherington: Spoke on behalf of her library-loving son and how important library access has been to his development. Expressed her appreciation for the library's children spaces, and support of library staff.
- Bruce Parks: Distributed a written document to board for submission into the record. Referenced recent article about Trustee Jacks and expressed his concern about a board member being part of the local democratic party.
- Gail Townsend: Expressed desire to hear from Trustees more about how they engage with and support libraries when not at board meetings. Questioned relevance of trustee questions regarding library operations as they should already know the answers if they frequent libraries.
- Naseem Jamnia: Reiterated Gail's request for Trustee updates on how they are helping libraries. Thanked Trustee Rodriguez for already sharing this information. Requested more transparency regarding trustee trainings and steps they will take to support the library system in the case of a defunded budget.
- Cate Salim: Referred to LBOT bylaws that were voted on last May, specifically page 2, section C and section D: ethics and ethical standards, duties of trustees. Mentioned Mike Clark's comments about waiting to hear from Chair Silver regarding library funding.
- Drew Ribar: Mentioned perceived budget problems at the city and county level, and the inevitability of budget cuts. Offered ideas to cut spending. Claimed meeting minutes had been altered and encouraged verbatim minutes for the future.

- Valerie Wade: Thanked library staff for their important work. Recounted past budget cuts and expressed concern that the library has never fully recovered; trustees are in a unique position to help. Urged board to disregard commentators who express “old fashioned” opinions.
- Janet Butcher: Distributed a printout to board. Referenced previous public commentator’s opinions, inability to trust the media, the article about Trustee Jacks, and her opinion regarding the potential staffing layoffs.
- Andrea Tavenar: Emphasized importance of library services for privileged and underprivileged communities. Expressed concern for library funding and her desire to see more support and advocacy from the board.
- Bri Schmidt: Expressed love for the library and its supportive spaces. Shared a library joke.
- Andrew Maurins: Apologized to community member Miss. Tibett for his actions at a previous meeting. Mentioned article about Trustee Jacks and reminded board that county employees are prohibited from electioneering.

#### 4. Board Comment [Non-Action Item] – Limited to Announcements, Strategic Plan Activity, Updates or Issues Proposed for Future Agendas and/or Workshops

- Trustee Moser spoke of the proposed mural for the Sparks library and thanked interim branch manager Kerry Stendell for her report analyzing this project. No grants are available but Moser pledged to donate her library stipend to the project. Chair Silver said she will do the same and encouraged fellow board members to follow suit. Moser would like to agendize the report as a non-action item.
- Chair Silver moved to agendize public comment to 3 minutes. Director Scott reminded her this decision was in her jurisdiction and she called for the change. Starting at the April meeting public comment will be extended to 3 minutes.
- Trustee Rodriguez shared the libraries she has visited recently and expressed her appreciation for the Libby app. Mentioned the services available to teens at the library including the Dungeons & Dragons gatherings.
- VC Ruff promised to match Moser’s donation for the mural. Thanked Megan Conelly for her presentation about the jail library. Thanked the Friends of the Library. Promised to complete trustee trainings and share her progress at the next board meeting.



- Trustee Jacks thanked everyone for coming and expressed her dedication to serving Washoe County citizens. Shared experience with homeschool community and how fundamental libraries are to their education. Shared the RTC bus route map created by Moser.
- Trustee Jacks asked Director Scott if the packets that were passed out will be added to the record. Director Scott confirmed that they will.
- Chair Silver addressed community members presumptions about board activities. Emphasized that all board members support the library and shared her personal contributions and actions. Expressed desire to see the budget restored, layoffs prevented, and libraries kept open and accessible to everyone.

#### 5. Approval of Meeting Minutes a) Approval of Minutes from the Library Board Meeting of February 19, 2025 [For Possible Action]

- Trustee Jacks would like to see corrections made to previous minutes to include her questions of a presenter, and further background given to a vote that was taken.
- VC Ruff requested a change in wording under 7c to clarify her intentions in the documented interaction.
- Chair called for minute approval, vote 4-1. Trustee Jacks requested changes be made before minutes approved. Deputy DA Kaplan clarified that minutes must be approved on the night of the board meeting. Director Scott suggested updates can be made and the packet reposted. Minutes were approved.

#### 6. Old Business

- None.

#### 7. New Business

- None

#### 8. Public Comment – Two Minute Time Limit Per Person [Non-Action Item] No discussion or action by the Board may be taken upon any matter raised under this public comment section until the matter has been specifically included on an agenda.

- Joni Hammond: Thanked Chair Silver for increasing public comment time. Continued earlier public comment about perceived sexual content in children's books. Called for restricted access but not a ban on books.

- Janet Butcher: Thanked trustees. Requested clarification on who oversees the library budget, and referenced WC1.
- Gail Townsend: Expressed appreciation for Sparks library and shared grandson's positive experiences.
- Andrea Tavenar: Outlined the role of a trustee and requested that board do everything in their power to keep the library funded. Expressed her openness to meeting with the board privately to share how she sees the system can be improved. Called for trustees to openly support and advocate for the library.
- Bri Schmidt: Thanked board for sharing their experiences with libraries. Sympathized with being on a board with so much contention and expressed hope that they view it as a request for improvement and not a personal attack. Shared another joke.

9. Staff Announcements [Non-Action Item] No discussion or action may be taken upon any matter raised under this comment section until the matter has been specifically included on an agenda.

- None

## 10. Adjournment

- Chair Silver adjourned the meeting at 8:10pm.